

**PROPOSED TERRITORY TRANSFER  
BETWEEN SULPHUR SPRINGS UNION AND  
SAUGUS UNION SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

**CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION**

Prepared for

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMITTEE ON  
SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION**

9300 Imperial Highway  
Downey, CA 90242

Prepared by

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# Notice of Exemption

## Appendix E

**To:** Office of Planning and Research  
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

County Clerk

County of: Los Angeles

12400 Imperial Hwy

Norwalk, CA 90650

**From:** (Public Agency): Los Angeles Committee  
on School District Organization

9300 Imperial Hwy, Downey, CA 90242-2890

(Address)

Project Title: PROPOSED TERRITORY TRANSFER BETWEEN SULPHUR SPRINGS UNION AND SAUGUS UNION SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Project Applicant: Saugus Union School District and Sulphur Springs Union School District

Project Location - Specific:

**Skyline Ranch Master Plan Community - 18120 Esker Lane Santa Clarita, CA 91351**

Project Location - City: Santa Clarita Project Location - County: Los Angeles

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The proposed project would transfer 23 single-family residential lots that straddle the existing school district boundary line between the Sulphur Springs Union and Saugus Union School Districts. The two school districts are in agreement and are jointly petitioning for 14 of the lots to be assigned to the Saugus Union School District and the remaining nine lots to be assigned to the Sulphur Springs Union School District.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMITTEE ON SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Los Angeles County Office of Education

Exempt Status: **(check one):**

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Class 19 Exemption, CEQA Section 15319
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number: \_\_\_\_\_

Reasons why project is exempt:

**The proposed project meets the conditions for the Class 19 Exemption under CEQA Section 15319 (Annexations of Existing Facilities and Lots for Exempt Facilities), and none of the exceptions pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 apply to the proposed project.**

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Allison Deegan Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (562) 922-6336

**If filed by applicant:**

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project?  Yes  No

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed by Lead Agency  Signed by Applicant

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.  
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

Date Received for filing at OPR: \_\_\_\_\_

## **INTRODUCTION**

This environmental document has been prepared under the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Public Resources Code Section 2100 *et seq.*, and the guidelines codified in Title 14 Code of Regulation (CCR) Section 15000 *et seq.* (the “CEQA Guidelines”). CEQA Guidelines Sections 15301 through 15333 describe 33 classes of projects (referred to as Class 1, Class 2, etc.) which have been determined not to have a significant effect on the environment, and therefore, are declared to be categorically exempt. The proposed territory transfer between the Sulphur Springs Union and Saugus Union School Districts (proposed project) meets the criteria for a Class 19 Categorical Exemption. This document describes the proposed project and details the analysis and findings leading to the determination that the proposed project is exempt from further environmental review under the provisions of CEQA.

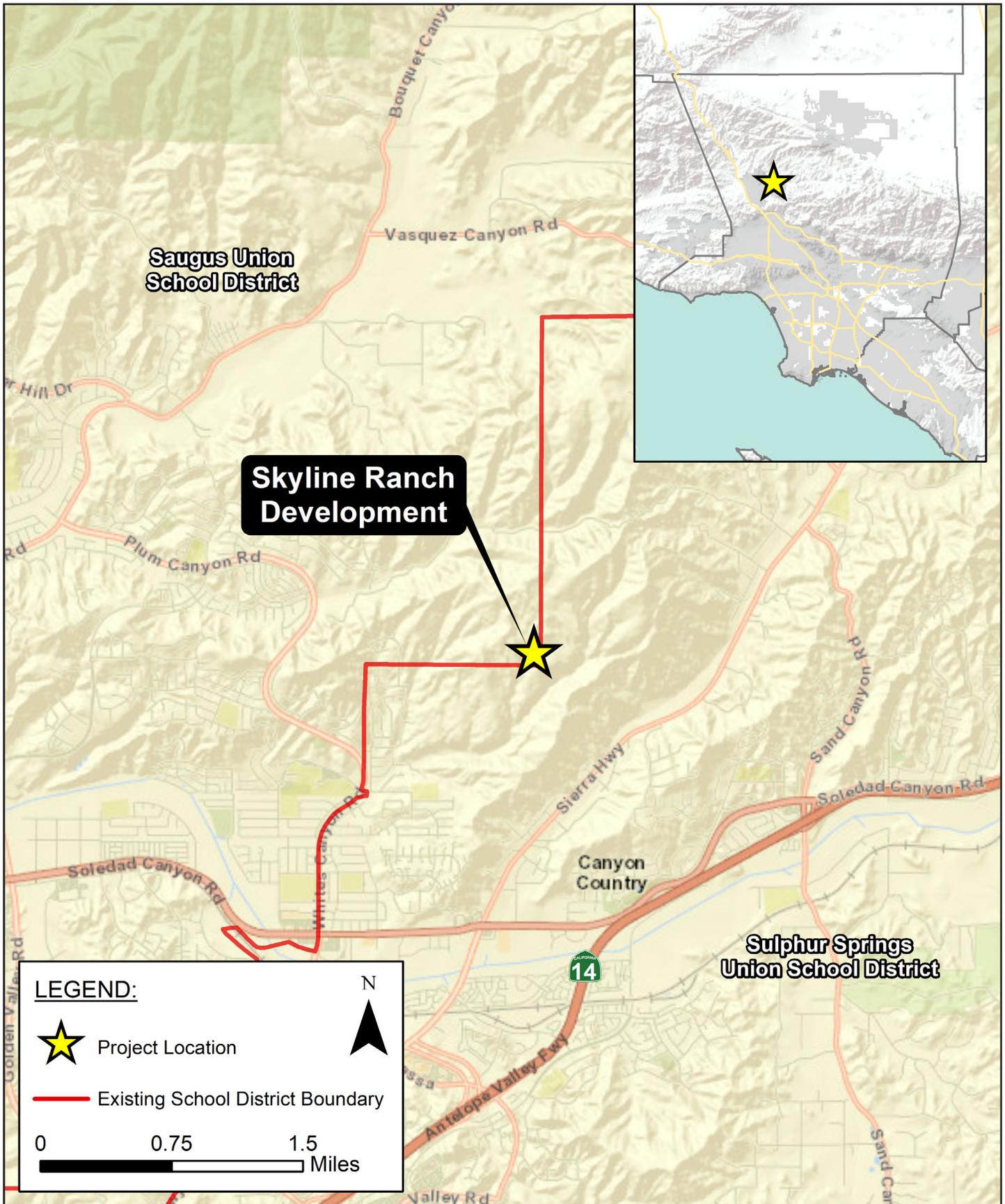
## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

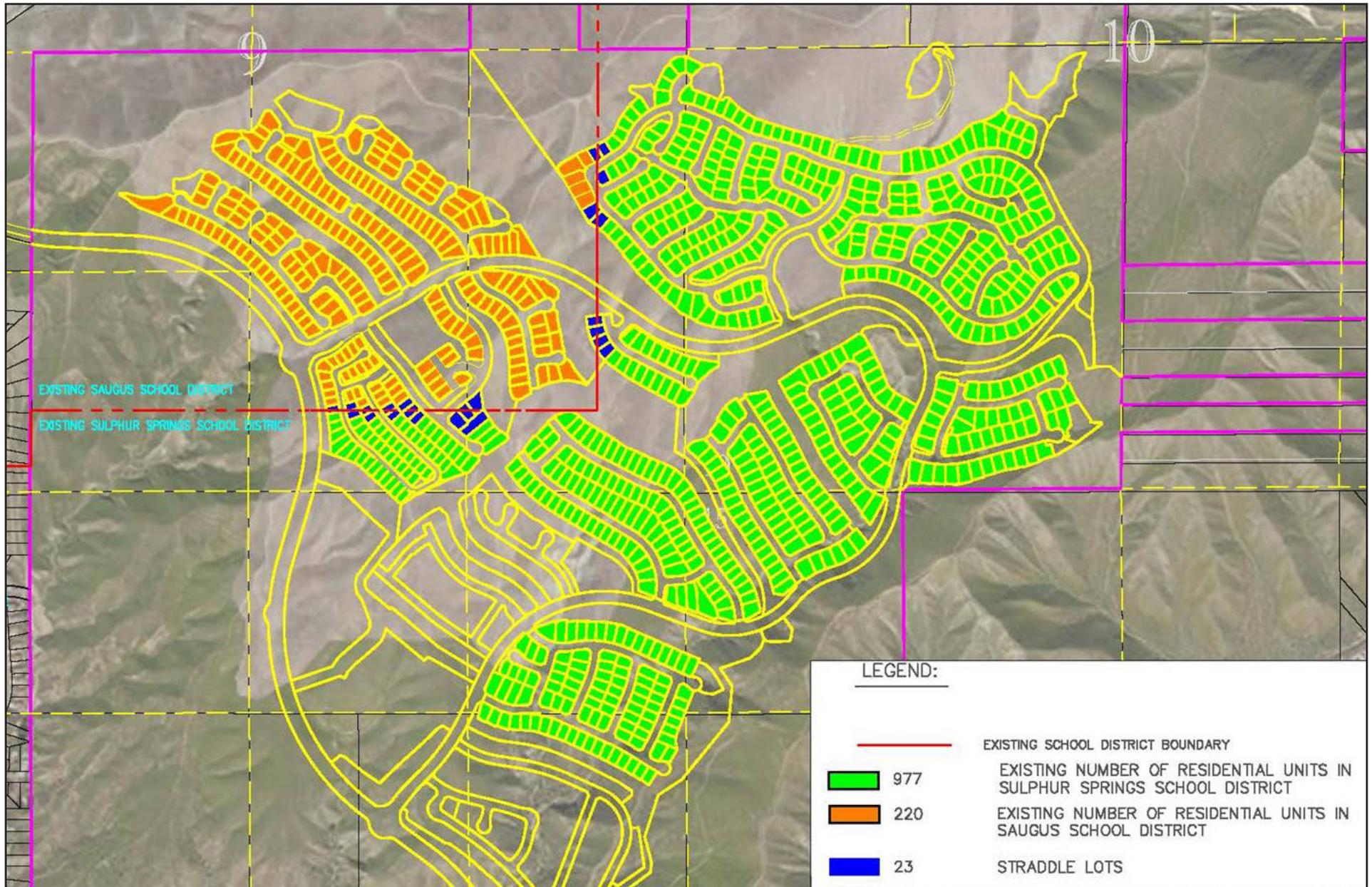
The proposed project would transfer 23 single-family residential lots (transfer territory) that straddle the existing school district boundary line between the Sulphur Springs Union and Saugus Union School Districts. The two school districts are in agreement and are jointly petitioning for 14 of the lots to be assigned to the Saugus Union School District and the remaining nine lots to be assigned to the Sulphur Springs Union School District. The residential properties within the Skyline Ranch development are currently under construction and are not yet occupied.

### **Project Location**

The transfer territory is located approximately 1.1 miles northwest of the State Route 14 Freeway and seven miles east of the Interstate 5 Freeway within the Skyline Ranch Master Planned Community in the City Santa Clarita (**Figure 1**). The transfer territory is located in the northwest area of the Skyline Ranch development, south of Stratus Street and east of Skyline Ranch Road. As shown in **Figure 2**, the transfer territory consists of 23 single-family residential lots that straddle the existing school district boundary line between the Sulphur Springs Union and Saugus Union School Districts.

Existing land uses surrounding the transfer territory beyond the Skyline Ranch development consist of large tracts of undeveloped lands to the north. The southern portion of the Skyline Ranch development lies adjacent to existing residential development. Land uses immediately surrounding the transfer territory within the Skyline Ranch Development consist of additional residential uses, a 12-acre parcel for an elementary school to be operated and maintained by the Sulphur Springs School District, approximately 12 acres of public parkland and six acres of private parkland, and approximately 1,355 acres dedicated or designated as natural open space through establishment of the Skyline Ranch Conservation Area (SRCA).





Source: Sulphur Springs Union and Saugus Union School Districts, 2020.

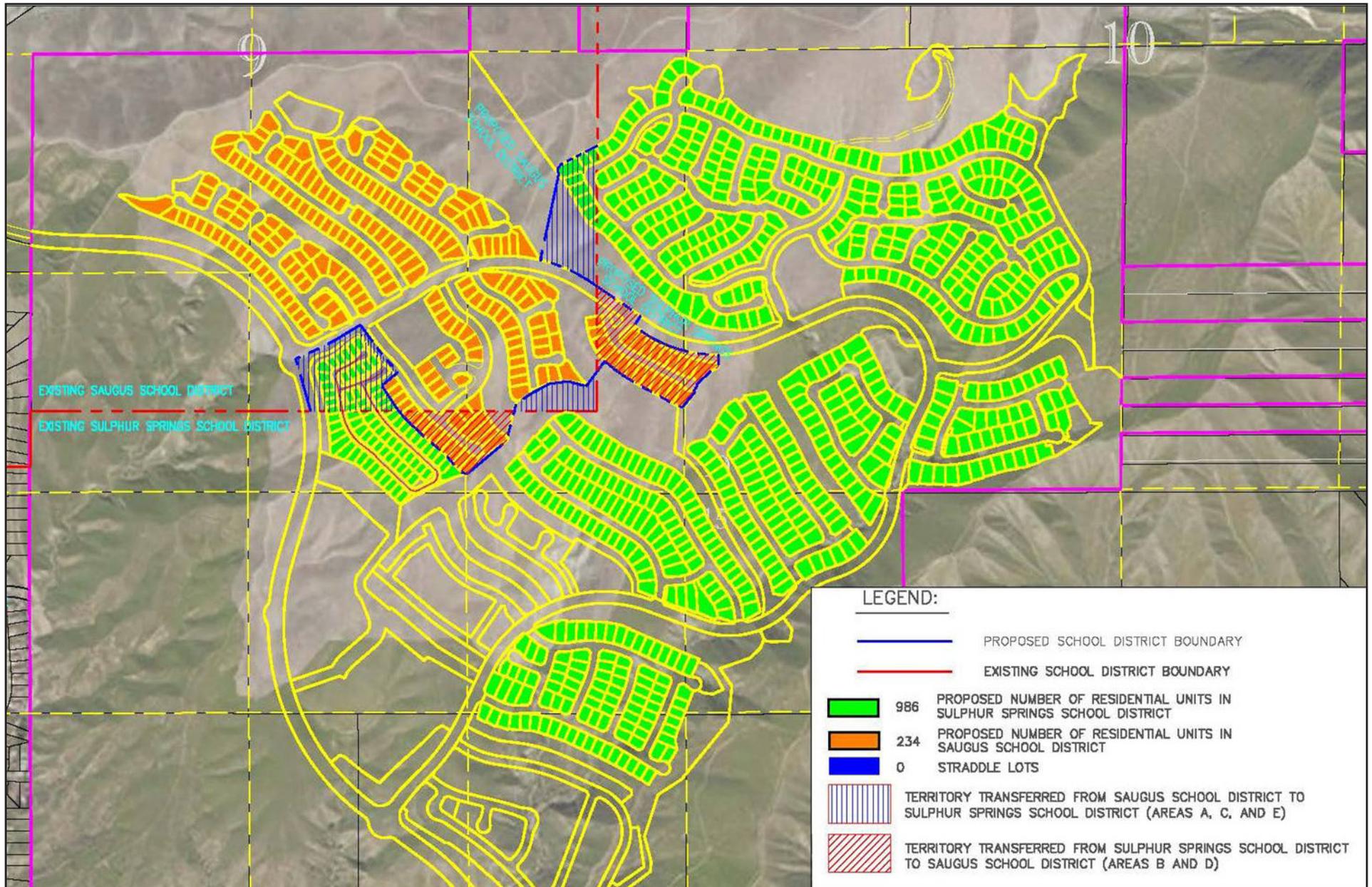
## **Project Background**

After the Skyline Ranch community was mapped and the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Skyline Ranch Project was certified on March 24, 2010, it was discovered that 23 single-family residential lots within the development straddle the school district boundary line between the Sulphur Springs Union and Saugus Union School Districts. Due of the topography, the community could not be adjusted to avoid straddle lots. Therefore, the two school districts have jointly petitioned for the territory transfer. The petition was presented to the Los Angeles County Committee on School District Organization (County Committee) on March 6, 2019.

Pursuant to California Board of Education, Education Code (EC) §35706 and conditions set forth in EC §35753, the territory transfer petition was examined by the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) in accordance to the nine conditions that guide review of school district organization petitions to transfer territory. LACOE's concluded that the territory transfer would substantially meet all of the nine conditions, and that it is in the best interest of both school districts, Los Angeles County agencies, and the future residents that the County Committee grant the joint petition.

## **Project Objectives**

The Sulphur Springs Union and the Saugus Union School Districts are jointly proposing that the existing school district boundary be adjusted to eliminate straddle lots and provide clarity to prospective residents as to their school district. Under the existing school district boundary, 220 properties lie within the Saugus Union School District and 977 properties lie within the Sulphur Springs Union School District. Under the proposed project, 14 of the straddle lots would be transferred to the Saugus Union School District and nine of the straddle lots would be transferred to Sulphur Springs Union School District. The proposed school district boundary is shown in **Figure 3**. A provision of the agreement would allow residents to attend the school of their choice



Source: Sulphur Springs Union and Saugus Union School Districts, 2020.



Proposed Territory Transfer Between Sulphur Springs Union and Saugus Union School Districts  
 Categorical Exemption

LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMITTEE ON SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

FIGURE 3  
 PROPOSED SCHOOL DISTRICT BOUNDARY

## **ENVIRONMENTAL PROCEDURES**

The CEQA Guidelines include a list of “classes” of projects which have been determined not to have a significant effect on the environment and are exempt from further environmental documentation under the provisions of CEQA. The proposed project meets the specific criteria for a Class 19 Categorical Exemption under CEQA Section 15319 (Annexations of Existing Facilities and Lots for Exempt Facilities). Class 19 Exemptions consists of projects meeting the conditions described below:

- 1. Annexations to a city or special district of areas containing existing public or private structures developed to the density allowed by the current zoning or pre-zoning of either the gaining or losing governmental agency whichever is more restrictive, provided, however, that the extension of utility services to the existing facilities would have a capacity to serve only the existing facilities.**

The 23 single-family residential lots that comprise the transfer territory currently straddle the boundary line between the Sulphur Springs Union and Saugus Union School Districts. The two school districts do not implement zoning regulations; however, the proposed project would not change the density as outlined in the EIR prepared for the Skyline Ranch Project (State Clearinghouse No. 2004101090). This certified EIR demonstrates that the Skyline Ranch development, including the transfer territory would be consistent with the existing density limits allowed by the current zoning and would not require plan or zoning amendments. The EIR also concludes that the Skyline Ranch Project supports and is consistent with policies established in the Southern California Association of Governments Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Compass Growth Visioning process, the County of Los Angeles General Plan, the Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan, the County of Los Angeles Zoning Code, and the County of Los Angeles Green Building Program Ordinances. Utility and public works agreements have already been granted for the Skyline Ranch Project, and the proposed project does not involve the extension of any utilities to the transfer territory. Therefore, the proposed project meets Condition 1.

- 2. Annexations of individual small parcels of the minimum size for facilities exempted by Section 15303, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures.**

Section 15303 of the CEQA Guidelines pertains to the construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures; installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures; and the conversion of existing small structures from one use to another where only minor modifications are made in the exterior of the structure. The proposed project would transfer territory between the Sulphur Springs Union and Saugus Union School Districts and does not involve the construction or conversion of any structures. The transfer territory consists of single-family lots with one residence per legal parcel, and thus fulfills the minimum size for facilities exempted by Section 15303. Therefore, the proposed project meets Condition 2.

## EXCEPTIONS TO CATEGORICAL EXEMPTIONS (CEQA GUIDELINES SECTION 15300.2)

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2, there are exceptions to Categorical Exemptions depending on the nature or location of the project, and a Lead Agency must evaluate whether any exceptions apply. The following section describes how none of the exceptions to Categorical Exemptions apply to the proposed project.

- 1. Location. Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located—a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply all instances, except where the project may impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.**

**This exception does not apply to the proposed project.** As described above, the proposed project meets the criteria for a Class 19 Categorical Exemption under CEQA Section 15319 (Annexations of Existing Facilities and Lots for Exempt Facilities). The “Location Exception” applies only to projects seeking a Class, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 Categorical Exemption. Therefore, this exception does not apply to the proposed project.

- 2. Cumulative Impact. All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.**

**This exception does not apply to the proposed project.** Potential cumulative impacts were evaluated in the certified EIR prepared for the Skyline Ranch Project. The proposed project would transfer territory between the Sulphur Springs Union and Saugus Union School Districts and does not involve the construction any structures. Although other projects may be constructed in the vicinity, the proposed project would not contribute to cumulative impacts. Therefore, this exception does not apply to the proposed project.

- 3. Significant Effect. A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.**

**This exception does not apply to the proposed project.** The EIR prepared for the Skyline Ranch Project determined that it would result in significant and unavoidable impacts related to aesthetics, construction-related noise and air quality, operational air quality, and public services; however, the County Board of Supervisors adopted a statement of overriding considerations stating that the benefits of this project outweighed the significant and unavoidable impacts. The proposed project would transfer territory between two school districts and does not involve the construction of any structures that would have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances. Therefore, this exception does not apply to the proposed project.

- 3. Scenic Highways. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway. This does not apply to improvements which are required as mitigation by an adopted negative declaration or certified EIR.**

**This exception does not apply to the proposed project.** Potential impacts related to scenic highways were evaluated in the certified EIR prepared for the Skyline Ranch Project. The proposed project would transfer territory between two school districts does not involve the construction of any structures that would damage scenic resources. Therefore, this exception does not apply to the proposed project.

- 4. Hazardous Waste Sites. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.**

**This exception does not apply to the proposed project.** Potential impacts related to hazardous wastes site were evaluated in the EIR prepared for the Skyline Ranch Project. The proposed project would transfer territory between two school districts and the transfer territory is not on a hazardous waste site. Therefore, this exception does not apply to the proposed project.

- 5. Historical Resources. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.**

**This exception does not apply to the proposed project.** Potential impacts related to historical resources were evaluated in the EIR prepared for the Skyline Ranch Project. The proposed project would transfer territory between two school districts and does not involve the construction of any structures that would cause an adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. Therefore, this exception does not apply to the proposed project.

## **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

As demonstrated above, the proposed project meets the criteria for the Class 19 Exemption under CEQA Section 15319 (Annexations of Existing Facilities and Lots for Exempt Facilities). The proposed project would transfer territory between two school districts and does not involve the construction or conversion of any structures. Therefore, the proposed project would not have a significant effect on the environment, and no further environmental review is required.